Mat-Su Monitor
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA COLLEGE
December 2010

Inflation in a Globalized Economy

By Jake Magoon

Mat-su Monitor

An old narrative is reentering the public discourse as the holiday season quickly approaches. This narrative, typically restricted to the esoteric realms of academic and kitchen-table speculation, is the sad child of, to put it charitably, imperfect information. That is to say, that the great hyperinflation monster is just around the corner. However, recent events have called into question the merit behind these fears. As such, the goal of this humble article is to address some of the current myths involving the future of our currency (the Almighty Dollar). Also on the agenda is the impact (or lack thereof) of debt on the options available to our policy makers, and most importantly, the potential impact on you, the reader, of decisions made in faraway places. One thing just about everyone agrees on is that runaway inflation is bad for just about every major player in the economy. What we want to know is what is going on with our money. Everything mentioned thus far plays a role, but in order to understand why that is the case, it is helpful to understand how inflation is measured (the Consumer Price Index is a popular tool), "core" inflation, and the cost of a full Thanksgiving dinner for ten.

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Tuition Prices to Rise Again

By Trisha Hardwick

In September 2009 the Board of Regents approved tuition rates for the 2011-2012 academic year at a $154 dollar per credit for lower-level courses and a $187 per credit for upper-division courses. Tuition revenue makes up only eleven percent of the university's overall budget. The rest of the revenue comes from the state government, federal research grants for projects, and private donations. Because of a decrease in federal and state funding along with rising costs and new programs, the Board of Regents finds it necessary to raise tuition once again.

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Prop B Makes the Cut

By Bradley Lucas

Mat-Su Monitor

Well November second has come and gone, and Alaskans cast their votes on a variety of issues, including Proposition B which passed with approximately fifty-nine percent of the votes. This proposition, in essence, proposed to create a $380 million dollar bond package that would fund such projects as improved science and lab facilities at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, a new sports arena at UAA, and a fish and game research building in Kodiak. Proposition B will mean many things to many different educational institutions, but to Mat-Su College, it means an auditorium and an expansion of Snodgrass Hall for the allowance of a larger paramedic/nursing facility which, in turn, will allow Mat-Su College to expand its degrees (or, at least, class offerings) in those fields.

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Is Hitchhiking for You?

By Sean Talbot

Mat-su Monitor

It's getting dark. I'm somewhere between Talkeetna and Broad Pass, and the sun is setting fast. My thumb is extended for every driver headed south, and some of them are nice enough to blink their high beams at me. Maybe they want to get a better look at the hitch hiker they won't pick up. Or will they?

The sky is beautiful out here. I can see the Milky Way and hear something out in the woods creeping about in the freshly fallen snow. But I know that with every new star that appears, my situation is more dangerous. And with every new sparkle in the sky, fewer drivers are willing to stop. Hitching is a hazardous business, after all, but not necessarily for the reasons you've been told before.

Have you ever needed a ride? When your car broke down and there was no cell service, what did you do? Put the hood up, stuck your thumb out and hope for the best? Would you pick you up?

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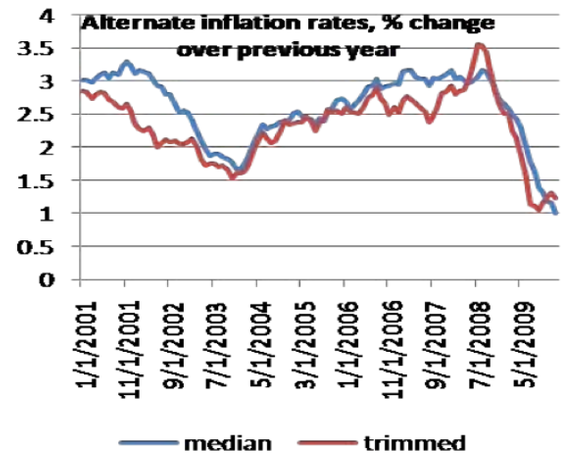
Inflation in a Globalized Economy

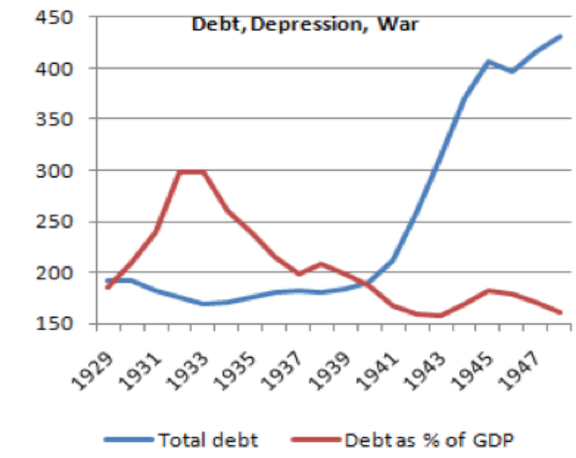
Continued from cover

Two of the most well known tools for measuring the average change in the price of goods and services we have available to us today are the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and what is known as "core inflation", which simply removes the volatile fluctuations of fuel and food from the equation. Whereas the CPI is useful for a broader cost of living measurement, core inflation measures "inflation inertia". For example, many prices are set by large firms and negotiated long-term contracts, including wages, with intervals going from months to years. When the market movers set their prices, they do so in advance. Thus, regardless of supply or demand, when a substantial future increase in price is anticipated, they respond via raising their prices by the anticipated amount of inflation. Once this cycle has begun, as was discovered in the 1970s-80s, extended periods of high unemployment and high interest rates tend to be required to "reign in" inflation.

The real target measurement here, of course, has to do with inflation inertia – the anticipated rise in prices. For that, many economists are turning to alternate measures, like the trimmed-mean and median inflation. These simply factor out prices that tend to fluctuate substantially in any given month.

Additionally, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the CPI for September 2010 was a whopping +.01%.





Now that we have some basic understanding of how we measure inflation, what's with much of the talk on cable news programs as of late, urging the viewers to buy gold, guns, and canned goods? The theory is, due to the current account deficit, national debt, real interests rates nearing 0% (discouraging saving), and "Quantitative Easing" pursued by the Federal Reserve (an injection of $600 billion into the economy), surely the excess monetary stimulus in the economy will drive up prices so quickly that firms will begin to factor this into their prices. The trouble is that this is not happening.

Fiscal policy, the other tool available that could boost GDP growth (and thus reduce the debt/GDP ratio – think interest rate on credit card/income ratio for us) via increasing consumer confidence and demand, reducing unemployment, and simultaneously accomplish badly need infrastructure projects, is politically speaking, dead in the water. One popular line goes along the lines of, "I can't spend my way out of debt, so neither can the government!" However, everyday people do this all the time; it is called investment (see: student loans). So too, as it turns out, can the government.

Imagine the line going up as your total credit-card debt. Now, imagine the line going down as that debt as a percentage of your income. From 1929 to 1933, the economic philosophies of the government centered on paying down the debt. Due to being in the middle of the Great Depression, the government cut spending (as we are suggesting today) right at the time when vulnerable businesses needed the demand the most. More people were laid off, who then spent less, and demand for products fell. This in turn lead to lower prices in an attempt to recapture demand and further layoffs due to a lack of a need for workers, which in turn further reduced demand. You see where this is going. This is the other side of the coin, the classic "deflationary spiral", and it is exactly why the Fed sets the target inflation rate at 2-3% and have been doing everything in their power to raise it above its frighteningly close proximity to deflation.

Sadly, I cannot predict what will become of our beloved currency over the next several months. What I can tell you is that, if hyperinflation is in our future, it isn't exactly just around the bend. If consumer demand picks up substantially, firms will begin to hire again, further increasing demand for goods and labor. There is one bright spot in all of this, despite the uncertainty of the future and potential consequences. The impact that this will have on us during this Thanksgiving season, dear readers, is one that is perhaps not so bad: According to the Virginia Farm Bureau, the cost of a full Thanksgiving meal for 10 will cost, on average, 1 cent more than in 2009, when it fell for the first time in 3 years.

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Hitchhiking

Continued from cover

Some people travel like that. They do it to see the world, to save money, or to meet people they never would otherwise. The reasons – and the stories – are endless. There is a kind of serenity in walking along the side of the road in the middle of nowhere—no cars, no towns, just the road—that most people will never know. The fear of uncertainty keeps most people from venturing outside their boundaries, and that fear can be gripping.

The media doesn't help me and my kind. In fact, the American media has been more responsible than the murderers they report for instilling the fear of hitching in the minds of the public. There are exceptions to every rule: not every star quarterback is a good man, not every cop sworn to protect and serve will do so, and not every backpacker on the side of the road with a smile and her thumb out is waiting for her next victim.

The concept of controlling our environment has become so prevalent that people are afraid of their instinct. In reality, we have nothing else to guide us. The less-than-one-percent of hitch-hiking-stories-gone-bad happened because someone didn't pay attention to their gut when they should have.

When I stopped next to the Arby's in Wasilla to pick up Dave, a lifelong Alaska resident who has hitched around the state and Canada for more than thirty years, he opened the passenger door and asked, "Are you sane? Because if you are, I've got some great stories for you, but if you ain't, keep on goin' where you're goin'." I gave him a ride into Anchorage, and along the way we shared some incredible experiences from the lonely northern highways. On more than one hitch north, I've been given rides to my doorstep up KGB when the driver's destination was Eagle River. I am not alone.

Hitching is not so much about getting a ride as it is about the experience, the lifestyle, the journey. It's about the enlightening conversations we have while smoking a bowl with a brand new friend. These friendships are not typical ones – they are lifetimes within themselves. In Fight Club, Chuck Palahniuk called them "single-serving friends." That's true, to an extent, albeit a little nihilistic. For me they are entire relationships lived to their potential, ending at their apogee as all great things should. My life is changed with nearly every ride, every debate on the inner workings of our specialized trades. I'm constantly learning and gaining new perspectives on the world.

People who pick up hitchhikers are usually kind souls who have done some amount of travelling themselves, or people who simply know what it's like to need a ride. But that doesn't mean everyone has good intentions. The first minute is always the wary and judgmental one: Judge the driver. Judge the hitcher.

Instinct is all we have. And therein lays the risk of hitching. If you depend on your instinct, everything will probably be fine. The moment we ignore our gut when it says to not pick this person up, to not take this ride, we might become the media's next poster child for all things dangerous in the world. Light up another Marlboro, this can be a stressful business.

"And to those that would never, may you find your flat at midnight, in the middle of December." – Anonymous

Mat-Su College
University of Alaska Anchorage

MSC Faculty Wanted!

Due to continuous record high enrollment and the ongoing addition of new courses for this academic year, Mat-Su College is looking for experienced applicants to teach various credit courses for the Spring 2011 semester and beyond!

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The University of Alaska is an equal employment opportunity/affirmative action employer and educational institution. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Applicants needing reasonable accommodation to participate in the application and screening process should contact the Mat-Su College Human Resource Services Coordinator at (907) 745-9725

Prob B Makes the Cut

Continued from cover

I spoke briefly with Director Talis Colberg on this issue to see what his thoughts were now that is has passed up at least one more rung on the voting ladder. He said that we, as a college, are obviously very excited about its passing, but the Board of Regents has yet to vote on it which will take place around February of next year. In regards to Mat-Su College's auditorium, there has been some discussion as to how many seats it will house, be it five hundred or about eight hundred. I asked Director Colberg if he could provide some new information on this issue, and he informed me that, at this time, he was not at liberty to say, as the question of how many seats the auditorium will be is just one of the many details that is currently being worked out with UAA. Regardless of how many seats the auditorium will hold, the hopeful voting-in of this proposition by the Board of Regents can only mean great things for Mat-Su College, including the expansion of our paramedic/ nursing facilities, the ability to attract theatre groups, and the ability to hold our commencement ceremony on campus.

The Mat-Su Monitor Wants You!

For information about how you can get involved contact Dr. Pete Praetorius.

matsumonitor@gmail.com

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Wolf Card Update

By Andrew Loeb

We here at the Mat-Su Monitor can't stress how important it is for each and every student to have a WOLFcard. It's necessary to have in order to check out books, movies, and audio tapes from the library. As well as any materials your professors have set aside for classes. Also and probably most importantly is the printing service at the library. Unfortunately, as it turns out, our Cafeteria will not be using the WOLFcard system. Nevertheless, your WOLFcard will be a necessary part of your college life. If you don't have one, go out and get one as soon as you can so you don't find yourself stressed before a paper is due with one more thing weighing you down.

Satisfied?

As most of you are aware, a Student Satisfaction Survey was sent out via students' UAA Webmail accounts to see how Mat-Su College is doing when it comes to satisfying the academic needs of its students. The survey was an online survey that allowed students to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction of Mat-Su College in a variety of areas from faculty and staff to whether or not there are enough study areas on campus. Also, a fifty dollar gift certificate was given to students who participated in the survey. I know that not all of the students at Mat-Su College will agree with me when I say this, but Mat-Su College is constantly striving to improve student satisfaction, and this is just one of the ways in which the college is working toward the goal of making every students' experience here at Mat-Su College a great one.

Interview with Dr. Robert DuBey

By Emily Pedersen

Dr. Robert DuBey attended school at the Kenai Peninsula College and later transferred to New Mexico Highlands University where he received a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and a Master's degree in Life Sciences. Dr. DuBey received a PhD in Biology at New Mexico State University after completing research on the etiology of whirling disease, a parasitic disease of Salmonids.

While at New Mexico State University, Dr. DuBey worked for the New Mexico Fisheries and Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit as a fishery specialist. One of his projects was quantifying impacts and population biology of Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout, which he is still involved in today. There is not a viable population of the Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout due to loss and competition from introduced species. At New Mexico Highland University, he served for 2 years as a Visiting Professor of Natural Resource Management. He also worked for the Park Service in Santa Fe, New Mexico as a Natural Resource Specialist. When Dr. DuBey returned to Alaska, he worked for the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association for 2 years. As the Association's science director he worked with the regions fishers on fisheries management and population issues. When funding for the program was cut short, he accepted a position at Mat-Su College, first as an adjunct and then as an Assistant Professor of Sciences.

Dr. DuBey enjoys working in the science department, teaching and being the science department coordinator. He likes to share his knowledge of science and hopes students find what interests them in the science field. Dr. DuBey would like to see the science program and the college grow so that students may get a Bachelors degree here. There need to be rigorous programs here at the college, so that students are prepared to enter professional programs. "Not enough credit is given to Mat-Su's role in science degree programs," says Dr. DuBey. He feels that Mat-Su should continue to be community based but needs more infrastructure to develop as a 4-year degree institution. Meeting those needs would benefit us all here at Mat-Su College.

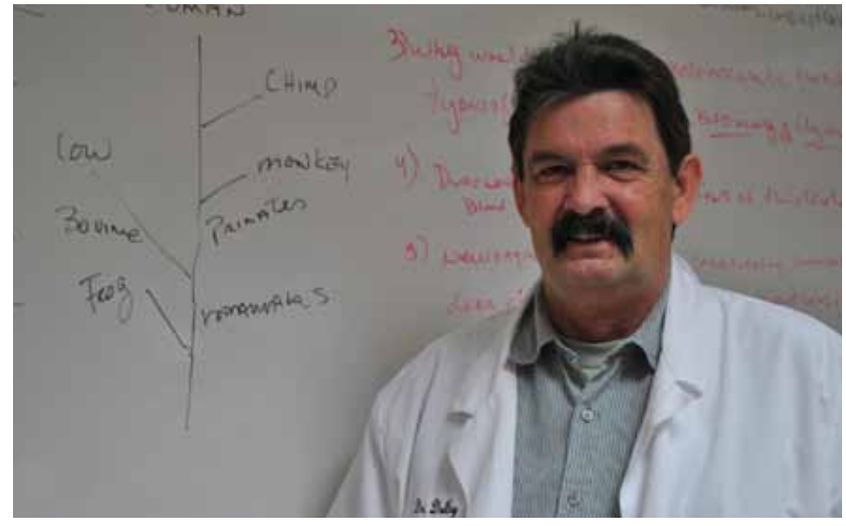

Photo: Dr. Robert DuBey

College Director Endorses Dragons

By Director Talis Colberg

The medieval city of Krakow is located in southern Poland. Krakow is a majestic city steeped in ancient traditions. Every day a trumpeter mounts a tower in the main square and plays a tune that ends abruptly - to commemorate the moment when an arrow cut down a bugler just as the Mongols entered the city in the 1241. The city is the home of the Jagiellonian University where Copernicus wrote his book about our place in the solar system. Krakow is dominated by Wawel Castle. The castle is in turn dominated by a cathedral, which is the tomb of the kings of Poland. Krakow, the ancient and sophisticated city that is last resting place of Poland's greatest kings also happens to be the reputed home of a dragon. Beneath the castle is a cave where visitors come daily to look into the dark lair of the fearsome beast. Dragons can be majestic, mysterious and powerful all at once. If a center of Western Civilization can be the home of a dragon, why not us?

Which brings me to the Arctic Dragons. Our new mascot. The voters have spoken. We live in a democracy, and our students have selected the "Arctic Dragons" as the official mascot of the Matanuska-Susitna College. Not necessarily my first choice, but I am hardly in a position to question the outcome of a process that I initiated.

I have to admit, it has taken a few days, but it is growing on me. My reasoning isn't all that tortured. A mythical mascot is not unprecedented. After all, what is a "seawolf"? If a make believe creature is going to be a mascot why not select a dragon. I mean, what is a sea wolf? A dog that paddles? Even a small dragon would make short work of a pack of seawolves.

As I retrace the steps back on the origins of the "dragons," I realize that there is no escaping some responsibility here. My idea was that a mascot would establish our own identity as a school distinct from our sister campuses. I had sat in on the Anchorage convocation when a Vice Provost led the crowd in the "Seawolf Howl". I felt oddly out of place. Should I try to howl? What was my status being part of UAA but from MSC? The other observation was that the crowd was into it – they howled and chuckled – they had that intangible camaraderie that comes with spirit. I pursued and obtained the green light to proceed with the creation of our own mascot.

I worked with our student leaders. They were receptive. We solicited nominations and then we had the election. I know there is already a petition underway to try to alter the mascot. However, in the meantime, the Arctic Dragons we are. Quite frankly, dragons have long held a venerated place in western civilization. Saturday I tried to get more with the program and rented the video "How to Train your Dragon". It was a cartoon. I didn't finish it. The dragons were too nice.

The first drawing of our dragon in the atrium shows that the image can possess both a fierce and a majestic countenance at one time. The idea of a mascot in a costume running around campus might at first seem problematic, but in fact Chinese parade dragons are fairly common, and the idea of several people in a dragon costume lends itself to group effort and school spirit. I suppose the next steps are to perfect the "Dragon Roar", perhaps a dragon song and then a contest for the official dragon logo. It is a unique mascot. Some people are very excited about this. This can work. I will ask Mr. Blomskog to draw up plans for the dungeon.

Go Dragons! ARRRGH!

Board of Regents to Raise Tuition

Continued from cover

The Board of Regents, an eleven member board appointed by the Governor of Alaska and confirmed by the Legislature (per the Alaska state constitution), meets eight times a year. They meet once a year in Juneau, and the rest of the year they meet throughout the state at different colleges. The Regents establish policy in areas such as personnel, campus development, student fees, admissions, and financial aid. The duties of the Regents include overseeing the financial management of the University, its investments, and its property holdings as well as appointing the President of the University.

Tuition is increasing for a number of reasons: With the enrollment for the University of Alaska increasing almost four percent each year from 2004 to 2009, the tuition increases are coming about due to the new faculty that has hired to teach and support the many new programs offered. Also, the drop in federal funding to the school, and the lack of support from state, also adds to the need.

The new programs that are being offered due to increasing student demand are all highly skilled work force programs that are expensive to deliver due to the skilled professors needed to teach the class and the small class size that allows optimal student to teacher ratios. Many of these workforce programs also require expensive equipment in order to teach the skills necessary. Process Technologies and Allied Health programs are an example of a few of these programs. The economical impacts these programs have on Alaska are significant, with just the campuses serving Ketchikan to Kotzebue estimating $121 million. The system serves sixteen campuses altogether. Also, off the road campuses cost more per student due to accessibility issues and low population densities of these areas.

In the September 2010 meeting the Board of Regents were presented with a proposal from UA President Mark Hamilton for an additional five percent increase for the 100-200 level courses, resulting in a ten percent increase for all level courses except graduate. The Board of Regents decided to delay the action on raising tuition for the 2012-2013 school year until the November 9th meeting being held in Anchorage. The Regents Recap and meeting minutes have not yet become available for review. If any one is interested in this information they may find more information at www.alaska.edu . Also, to voice opinions or concerns contact student government, accessible by the Mat-Su College home page.

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Heating, Refrigeration, and Beyond

By Robert Rootes

There's a set of double doors across the hall from Jalmar Kerttula Building (JKB) Room 124 at Matanuska-Susitna College in the Valley. For many students not in the program those doors, labeled JKB 120, lead to something mysterious and technical. Most students might assume those doors lead to the hidden maintenance workings of the college that maintain their year-around comfort without worry and ignore that area altogether. However, for those seeking a demanding career field, those steel double doors lead to opportunity. JKB 120 is the heart and headquarters for the Refrigeration and Heating Technology Program at Mat-Su College.

Not only is it the only accredited program of its kind in Alaska, what you take away upon completion of the program is a strong fundamental understanding of modern commercial and residential heating, commercial refrigeration, air-conditioning, and ventilation (HVAC). Instructors Dan Mielke and Jack Cypher have over 60 years of combined HVAC experience between them. Without their blended formable knowledge and understanding of the HVAC field this program would lack the experience required for a career. It is the dedication of these innovative instructors that gives the program the tools for success.

Dan Mielke has been teaching HVAC technology for sixteen years. Prior to teaching Mielke has enjoyed being an HVAC technician and still maintains part-time employment in the field, traveling to rural Alaska when there is a need for his expertise. Dan says he likes the challenges afforded him in HVAC and allows him to keep current with the technology. Dan's focus in the HVAC program is in refrigeration.

Jack Cypher takes over where Mielke's instruction ends with the heating technology. Cypher has been instructing at the college for thirteen years and managed HVAC technicians since 1972. Cypher's fieldwork includes residential heating with installation and service with light commercial applications. In the HVAC program Cypher's focus is in the heating and air-conditioning technology.

Mat-Su's HVAC program is rigorous and rewarding. There is student diversity unlike other programs at the college. From high school graduate freshmen first-year students unsullied by world so far, to adults advancing toward career changes. The HVAC program at Mat-Su has more opportunities for real world applications than most other career ventures. While in the program students learn applied skills with Occupational Endorsement Certificates (OEC) as well as an Associate of Applied Science (AAS). Some students seek only the certifications in HVAC. "These certifications are often expected by employers as minimum requirements for an entry-level technician in the HVAC industry," says Cypher. "Both the Certificates and the Degree are University of Alaska course offerings and are recognized by, and can be transferred to most other universities or schools with similar programs. For instance, Ferris State University in Michigan has specifically cross-indexed classes in their program with ours." Other students want the AAS and with HVAC as the foundation for the degree a student will always find employment available. "This is a field that will not go away and is stable because it doesn't cycle with the economy," Mielke states. Everyone needs a refrigerator and heating to live comfortably.

The HVAC program is demanding and takes focus and personal energy to achieve successful completion. Students that stay in the program and move from the first year into the second year are usually serious about the career prospects. There is a need for HVAC technicians in the entire world and many graduates have gone on to lucrative career ventures. With the training and experience HVAC technicians can earn over $30.00 in hourly wages.

Attitude is what makes good technicians. There is no short supply of hands-on training in this program. Students are required to have prerequisites of algebra, reading and writing competency, and basic computer skills. For those unsure of the demand for HVAC technicians just wait until you wake up freezing in winter because the furnace died in the night or milk in the refrigerator has congealed because the refrigerator mysteriously quit doing its job. Once you pay the repair bills on these everyday household appliances we take for granted you will appreciate that it can be costly at times as well as the idea that it might not be such a bad field to get into. The refrigeration aspect of the program emphasizes commercial refrigeration applications.

Both Mielke and Cypher enjoy the hands-on training they provide students. From building a working refrigerator the first year to constructing sheet metal fabricated ductwork for furnace and air-conditioning the second year, a student will have plenty to do during the program. It takes self-starts and motivation to be in the HVAC program. However, when it's completed students have fundamentals in heating, air-conditioning technology and electronic controls, heat pumps, and furnaces. Like any good curriculum the combined courses compliment and build on each other. From customer relations, job etiquette and technical math to commercial and ammonia refrigeration including the principles of thermodynamics this set of courses is designed with comprehensive job related fields in mind. Cypher says about the courses, "Making it a requirement makes [the course] important."

What I personally can say about the HVAC program is my appreciation for the field. With the continued curriculum during my second year, I know it takes a very motivated individual to meet and exceed expectations. I had no understanding of HVAC when I entered the program and I have become enriched by the absorption of the material. I've applied my knowledge with the trade in mind and am confident that I will complete the required courses, use the practical experience in the lectures and hands-on training to secure gainful employment anywhere I choose to go after graduation.

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The Math of Speeding

By Andrew Loeb

In our fast paced society, we want everything as soon as we can get it: fast food, fast money, and fast cars. I've especially noticed our need to hurry in how fast we drive. I had been thinking about it for some time and I realized that speeding can't be all that beneficial. We're all bombarded with how unsafe it is, not only to ourselves, but also other people on the road. I decided to look at speeding from a mathematical perspective to see if there was some reason to travel over the speed limit. Considering that speed limits are determined by numerous factors such as zoning area, length of road, number of stops, and number of lanes; this list is not exhaustive by any means. I have compiled a list of common routes travelled on a regular basis and determined how much time is "saved" by speeding.

Glenn Highway – Anchorage Distance: 35 miles

Average Speed	Travel Time	Difference
50	42 minutes	---
55	38 minutes	4 min
60	35 minutes	3 min
65	32 minutes	3 min
70	30 minutes	2 min
75	28 minutes	2 min
80	26 minutes	2 min

Just looking at this table alone, we see that a difference of 30 miles per hour (mph) only yields a gain or loss of 16 minutes. Even looking at 5 mph intervals, the time saved can be eliminated by hitting a stop light right as it turns. All that time saved is gone in an instant.

Taking into consideration the relatively short distance between those two points, I decided to look at three other common routes: Wasilla to Fairbanks, Palmer to Glennallen, and Anchorage to Seward.

Wasilla – Fairbanks Distance: 324 miles

Average Speed	Travel Time	Difference
50	6 hours 29 minutes	---
55	5 hours 53 minutes	36 min
60	5 hours 20 minutes	33 min
65	4 hours 58 minutes	22 min
70	4 hours 37 minutes	19 min
75	4 hours 19 minutes	18 min
80	4 hours 3 minutes	16 min

Taking this second set of numbers into consideration, two patterns start to form. The faster you travel, the less time you gain. Also, the longer distance travelled, the larger difference those 5 mph start to make. The following charts are purely educational and can be applied to further demonstrate the distance to speed to time ratio.

Anchorage – Seward Distance: 126 miles

Average Speed	Travel Time	Difference
50	2 hours 31 minutes	---
55	2 hours 17 minutes	14 min
60	2 hours 6 minutes	11 min
65	1 hours 55 minutes	11 min
70	1 hour 48 minutes	7 min
75	1 hour 40 minutes	8 min
80	1 hour 34 minutes	6 min

Anchorage – Glennallen Distance: 180 miles

Average Speed	Travel Time	Difference
50	3 hours 36 minutes	---
55	3 hours 16 minutes	20 min
60	3 hours	16 min
65	2 hours 45 minutes	15 min
70	2 hours 34 minutes	11 min
75	2 hours 24 minutes	10 min
80	2 hours 15 minutes	9 min

Looking at these numbers, it's apparent that unless you're travelling so much over the speed limit to make up any time you may have lost by being late, the time is negligible due to the distance travelled. And if you're going that fast, either a cop will see you and even more time will be lost or the danger will be so high, ending up in the ditch or in the back of another vehicle is a definite possibility.

All in all, speeding is not only dangerous, but also pointless. All the time saved by going that little bit faster could be made up by leaving a little bit early.

Piccolino's Restaurant Review

By Hatie Schmidkunz

Heading to Piccolino's with an empty belly, I remember my last visit to this classy restaurant. Some friends and I had chosen to have dinner here before going to our senior prom. Our orders included a very nice pasta dish, huge salads, and tasty cheese sticks with sauce. We had experienced a wonderful meal with very professional service. I am excited to come here again. Today, I'm here for lunch, and I've brought along my boyfriend.

The restaurant is very clean and attractive. The interior design includes a mahogany color scheme and plaster grape castings adorn the walls. The dim lighting and dark red colors set a lovely relaxing mood. We are politely escorted to our table with a smile. Water is served in large elegant wine-glasses with lemon slices. My date ordered a "Mawi Wawi" calzone. It consisted mainly of pineapple, Canadian bacon, pepperonis, and mozzarella cheese. I asked for a spinach calzone. This was mostly spinach, onions, and mushrooms with lots of mozzarella cheese and accompanied by a dish of marinara sauce. They cost about $15.00 each. The price is justified when the enormous calzones arrive. They are incredibly delicious. The bread crust of the calzone was perfectly soft and seasoned with garlic. It's simply amazing when dipped in the marinara sauce. Yummy! The calzone is a lot of food, and I cannot finish it in one sitting. My hungry date however, has no problem polishing it off.

Piccolino's is a wonderful restaurant for family or business dining. The food and service is top notch. The restaurant is open Sunday - Thursday (11:00am – 9:00pm) and Friday –Saturday (11:00am-10:00pm). It's located in the Shop Rite Mall in Wasilla. In addition they offer take-out and delivery services.

Movie Review

Scott Pilgrim vs. the World
By Andrew Loeb

Scott Pilgrim (Michael Cera) is an aspiring bassist. He lives a mediocre life with his gay roommate Wallace (Kieran Culkin) in a run-down seemingly renovated storage closet. His life revolves around his "younger" girlfriend, 17, and his friends and band-mates continually give him crap about it. That is, until he meets Ramona Flowers (Mary Elizabeth Winstead). He falls instantly for her even though his first interaction with her turns out to be a dream.

Scott falls head over heels for Ramona. His only problem is that when he breaks up with his current girlfriend, she doesn't take it very well. On top of that, in order for Scott to stay with Ramona, he has to defeat her "seven evil exes." This is where the movie holds most of its charm.

Throughout his journey, he has to battle more than Ramona's exes. He battles his roommate's insatiable libido, for everyone but Scott; he battles his exes for his own sanity, and he battles against other bands to enter the battle of the bands. Can Scott gain the power he needs to defeat all the exes?

I thought this movie was endearingly ridiculous. The overacting and impossible scenes gave this film the video game-y quality I believe it was shooting for. The special effects and sounds effects took me back to child hood because of all the old-school video game effects. But while this film is great, I believe the replay value suffers as the nostalgic effect will fade. Story: 9/10
Comedy: 8/10
Characters: 8/10 Effects: 10/10
Romance: 7/10 Adventure: 8/10
Replay Value: Medium Low

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